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The Defence of Poesy. By Sir Philip Sidney, knt. 1752.

[Retrospective Review.]

ONE would think, that to write a "*Defence of Poesy*," were something like writing "*an Apology for the Bible*." And yet it appears that this was considered necessary, by the most poetical person of the most poetical age that England, or any other country, ever knew. It must be remembered, however, that the exact period to which we are now referring was but the early dawn of the bright Elizabethan day—Shakspeare and the great dramatists having scarcely as yet commenced their immortal labours, and Sidney himself being, with the exception of Spencer, the best poet of the time. That this noble defence of his high art had some share in bringing forward the glories that followed so close upon its appearance, as well as in preparing the way for the due reception and appreciation of those glories, is what can scarcely be doubted; and that it was intended and calculated so to do, is certain: for, of all the characteristics that belong to it, that of a fervid sincerity, speaking from the heart, to the heart, is its most striking. In other respects, the excellencies of this admirable Essay are equally conspicuous, whether we regard the purity and simplicity of its style, the strength and soundness of its reasoning, the rich fervor of its eloquence, or the variety and aptness of its illustrations. In short, nothing is wanting to make the *Defence of Poesy* a piece of writing that, in a similar space, is not to be paralleled in our language.

Sir Philip Sidney, in the opening paragraph of his essay, gives himself out as "a piece of a logician;" and, in fact, the *Defence of Poesy* may be regarded as a logical discourse, from beginning to end—interspersed here and there with a few of the more flowery parts of eloquence, but every where keeping in view the main objects of all logic and of all eloquence—namely, proof and persuasion. It is, in fact—contrary to the general notion that prevails concerning it

in the minds of those who do not take the trouble of judging for themselves—a sober and serious disquisition, almost entirely rejecting the "foreign aid of ornament," and equally free from dogmatism and declamation. It is evidently the result of a deep conviction in the mind of the writer, and a strong desire to impress that conviction upon others—to impress it, however, in a manner that shall render it not merely a sentiment of the heart, or a theory of the brain, but a settled and active belief of the reason and the judgment. To this end Sir Philip Sidney not only examines the nature and objects of poetry as an art, and brings forward all the arguments that have been urged in its favour, but he weighs and examines those arguments fairly, and contrasts them with those which have been or may be alleged on the opposite side of the question; and finally rejects or admits, as the proofs may seem to preponderate. He begins by showing the antiquity of poetry, and arguing for the consequent inference, that it was the parent and source of all other learning; and this he addresses to those learned of his own and of other days who have inveighed against poetry as a vain thing. "And will you play the hedge-hog, (says he) that being received into the den drove out his host? or rather the vipers, that with their birth kill their parents? Let learned Greece, in any of her manifold sciences, be able to show me one book before Musæus, Homer, and Hesiod—all three nothing else but poets. Nay, let any history be brought, that can say any writers were there before them, if they were not men of the same skill—as Linus, Orpheus, and some others, are named, who having been the first of that country that made pens deliverers of their knowledge to posterity, may justly challenge to be called their fathers in learning." And so he goes on, through the earliest writers of all civilized countries; and concludes the enumeration thus: "In our neighbour country, Ireland, where truly learning goes very bare, yet are their poets held in devout reverence. Even among the most barbarous and simple Indians," (only the next remove to the Irish, as he seems to think) where no writing is, yet have they their poets, who make and sing

songs, which they call 'Arentos,' both of their ancestors' deeds, and praises of their gods. A sufficient probability that, if ever learning came among them, it must be by having their hard, dull wits softened and sharpened with the sweet delight of poetry; for until they find a pleasure in the exercise of the mind, great promises of much knowledge will little persuade them that know not the fruits of knowledge." He next proceeds to contrast poetry generally, as an art, with all other arts and sciences, in the following skilful and highly eloquent manner:

"There is no art delivered to mankind, that hath not the works of nature for its principal object, without which they could not exist, and on which they so depend, as they become actors and players, as it were, of what nature will have set forth. So doth the astronomer look upon the stars, and by that he seeth set down what order nature hath taken therein. So doth the geometrician and arithmetician, in their divers sorts of quantities. So doth the musician, in tunes tell you which by nature agree, which not. The natural philosopher thereon hath his name, and the moral philosopher standeth upon the natural virtues, vices, or passions of man: And follow nature, saith he, therein, and you shall not err. The lawyer saith what men have determined. The historian, what men have done. The grammarian speaketh only of the rules of speech, and the rhetorician and logician, considering what in nature will soonest prove and persuade, thereon give artificial rules, which are still compassed within the circle of a question, according to the proposed matter. The physician weigheth the nature of man's body, and the nature of things hurtful or helpful to it. And the metaphysic, though it be in the second and abstract notions, and therefore be counted supernatural, yet doth he indeed build upon the depth of nature."

How extremely accurate are the thoughts, in all this; and with what felicitous simplicity are they expressed! Now mark the fine burst of enthusiasm by which the argument is applied and summed up.

"Only the poet, disdaining to be tied to any such subjection, lifted up with the vigour of his own invention, doth grow, in effect, into another nature; in making things either better than nature bringeth forth, or quite anew, forms such as never were in nature, as the heroes, demigods, cyclops, chimeras, furies, and such like, so as he goeth hand in hand with nature, not enclosed within the narrow warrant of her gifts, but freely ranging within the zodiac of his own wit. Nature never set forth the earth in so rich tapestry as divers poets have done; neither with so pleasant rivers, fruitful trees, sweet-

smelling flowers, nor whatsoever else may make the too-much-loved earth more lovely: her world is brazen, the poets only deliver a golden."—"Neither let it be deemed too saucy a comparison, to balance the highest point of man's wit with the efficacy of nature; but rather give right honour to the heavenly Maker of that maker, who having made man in his own likeness, set him beyond and over all the works of that second nature, which in nothing he showed so much as in poetry—when, with the force of a divine breath, he bringeth things forth surpassing her doings; with no small arguments to the incredulous of that first accursed fall of Adam.—Since our erect wit maketh us know what perfection is, and yet our infected wit keepeth us from reaching unto it."

He now proceeds to arrange poetry under various artificial divisions and subdivisions; showing, however, that they all do and must lead to the same great end, of bettering mankind by means of delighting them. We shall not follow him minutely through this part of the subject, but may mention, in passing, that he here announces, and in some degree developes, those views in regard to versification and diction, the mere revival of which has been thought a stroke of genius in our own times.

The next step our author takes in his eloquent disquisition on the value and virtue of poesy, is to contrast it somewhat circumstantially with the other high sciences, and demonstrate its comparative superiority over them all. Those who only know Sir Philip Sidney as a chivalrous soldier, an inditer of extravagant verses, and a builder up of the most romantic romance that ever represented things and persons as *they are not*, will be surprised to observe the extraordinary accuracy of thought, as well as of feeling, which pervades all the definitions and descriptions that occur in this part of the Essay. Let the reader take the following as proofs, that acute penetration and thorough good sense are in no degree incompatible with the most fervid enthusiasm and the most lofty imagination.

"So that the ending of all earthly learning being virtuous action, those skills that most serve to bring forth that, have a most just title to be princes over all the rest; wherein, if we can show it rightly, the poet is worthy to have it before any other competitors: among whom, principally to challenge it, step forth the moral philosophers; whom methinks I see coming towards me with a sullen gravity, as though they could not abide vice by day-light: rudely clothed, for to witness outwardly their contempt of outward things; with books in their hands against glory, whereto they set their names; sophistically speaking against sub-

diety, and angry with a man in whom they see the foul fault of anger."

Again :

"The historian scarce gives leisure to the moralist to say so much, but that he, laden with old mouse-eaten records, authorising himself for the most part upon other histories, whose greatest authorities are built upon the notable foundation of hearsay—having much ado to accord differing writers, and to pick truth out of partiality; better acquainted with a thousand years ago than with the present age, and yet better knowing how this world goes than how his own wit runs; curious for antiquities, and inquisitive of novelties; a wonder to young folks, and a tyrant in table-talk—denieth, in a great chafe, that any man, for teaching of virtue and virtuous actions, is comparable to him."—"The philosopher, therefore, and the historian are they which would win the goal, the one by precept, the other by example; but both, not having both, do both halt. For the philosopher, sitting down with the thorny arguments, the bare rule is so hard of utterance, and so misty to be conceived, that one that hath no other guide but him shall wade in him until he be old, before he shall find sufficient cause to be honest. For this knowledge standeth so upon the abstract and general, that happy is that man who may understand him, and more happy that can apply what he doth understand. On the other side, the historian, wanting the precept, is so tied, not to what should be, but to what is—to the particular truth of things, and not the general reason of things—that his example draweth not necessary consequence, and therefore a less fruitful doctrine. Now doth the peerless poet perform both; for whatsoever the philosopher saith should be done, he giveth a perfect picture of it, by some one by whom he presupposeth it was done; so as he coupleth the general notion with the particular example. A perfect picture, I say—for he yieldeth to the powers of the mind an image of that whereof the philosopher bestoweth but a wordish description, which doth neither strike, pierce, nor possess the sight of the soul, so much as that other doth."—"So, no doubt, the philosopher with his learned definitions, be it of virtues or vices, matters of public policy or private government, replenisheth the memory with many infallible grounds of wisdom, which, notwithstanding, lie dark before the imaginative and judging power, if they be not illuminated and figured forth by the speaking picture of poesy. Tully taketh much pains, and many times not without poetical helps, to make us know what force the love of our country hath in us: let us but hear old Anchises, speaking in the midst of Troy's flames; or see Ulysses, in the fulness of all Calypso's

delights, bewailing his absence from barren and beggarly Ithaca! Anger, the Stoics said, was a short madness; let but Sophocles bring you Ajax on a stage, killing or whipping sheep and oxen, thinking them the army of the Greeks, with their chieftains Agamemnon and Menelaus; and tell me if you have not a more familiar insight into anger than finding in the school-men its *genus* and *difference*?"

After a multiplicity of other examples of a similar kind, he adds :

"For conclusion, I say, the philosopher teacheth, but he teacheth obscurely, so as the learned only can understand him; that is to say, he teacheth them that are already taught. But the poet is the food for tender stomachs; the poet is indeed the right popular philosopher."

Thus far our author has been comparing the poet's power of teaching with that of the philosopher. He next examines, in detail, the relative pretensions of the poet and the historian. One of his most powerful arguments in favor of the former's infinite superiority, is set down as follows :

"But history, being captived to the truth of a foolish world, is many times a terror to well doing, and an encouragement to unbridled wickedness. For see we not valiant Miltiades rot in his fetters? The just Phocion and the accomplished Socrates put to death like traitors? The cruel Severus living prosperously? Sylla and Marius dying in their beds? Pompey and Cicero slain then, when they would have thought exile a happiness? See we not virtuous Cato driven to kill himself, and rebel Cæsar so advanced, that his name yet, after sixteen hundred years, lasteth in the highest honour?"

Having gone through these particular comparisons, and added many more arguments, no less just than ingenious, in proof of his proposition, he now concludes this part of his subject by a general summary, from which we select the following admirable passages—which, for justness of thought, and curious felicity of expression, cannot well be surpassed.

"Now therein"—(that is to say, the power of at once teaching and enticing to do well)—"Now therein, of all sciences—I speak still of human and according to human conceit—is our poet the monarch. For he doth not only show the way, but giveth so sweet a prospect into the way, as will entice any man to enter into it. Nay, he doth as if your journey should lie through a fair vineyard, at the very first give you a cluster of grapes, that, full of that taste, you may long to pass further. He beginneth not with obscure definitions, which must blur the margent with interpretations, and load the memory with doubtfulness; but he

cometh to you with words set in delightful proportion, either accompanied with, or prepared for, the well-enchanting skill of music ; and with a tale, forsooth, he cometh unto you with a tale, which holdeth children from play, and old men from the chimney-corner ; and pretending no more, doth intend the winning of the mind from wickedness to virtue, even as the child is often brought to take most wholesome things, by hiding them in such other as have a pleasant taste."—"For even those hard-hearted evil men, who think virtue a school-name, and know no other good but *indulgere genio*, and therefore despise the austere admonitions of the philosopher, and feel not the inward reason they stand upon, yet will be content to be delighted : which is all the good fellow poet seems to promise ; and so steal to see the form of goodness—which seen, they cannot but love ere themselves be aware, as if they had taken a medicine of cherries."—"By these, therefore, examples and reasons, I think it may be manifest that the poet, with that same hand of delight, doth draw the mind more effectually than any other art doth. And so a conclusion not unfity ensues, that as virtue is the most excellent resting-place for all worldly learning to make an end of, so poetry, being the most familiar to teach it, and most princely to move towards it, in the most excellent work is the most excellent workman."—"Since, then, poetry is of all human learning the most antient, and of most fatherly antiquity, as from thence other learnings have taken their beginnings ;—Since it is so universal that no learned nation doth despise it, no barbarous nation is without it ;—Since both Roman and Greek gave such divine names unto it, the one of prophesying, the other of making ; and that, indeed, that name of making is fit for it, considering that whereas all other arts retain themselves within their subject, and receive, as it were, their being from it—the poet, only, bringeth his own stuff, and doth not learn a conceit out of the matter, but maketh matter for a conceit ;—Since neither his description nor end containing any evil, the thing described cannot be evil ;—Since his effects be so good as to teach goodness and delight the learners of it ;—Since therein (namely, in moral doctrine, the chief of all knowledge) he doth not only far pass the historian, but, for instructing, is well nigh comparable to the philosopher, and for moving leaveth him behind ;—Since the Holy Scripture (wherein there is no uncleanness) hath whole parts in it poetical, and that even our Saviour Christ vouchsafed to use the flowers of it ;—Since all its kinds are not only in their united forms, but in their severed dissections fully commendable :—I think—(and I think I think rightly)—the laurel crown appointed

for triumphant captains, doth worthily, of all other learnings, honour the poet's triumph."

Our author now proceeds to state the objections that have been made, or that may be, against his art—doing this, however, rather as a work of supererogation, than of necessity ; but giving as a reason for it, "because we have ears as well as tongues, and that the lightest reasons that may be, will seem to weigh greatly, if nothing be put in the counter-balance." Let our modern critical wits—who pique themselves on the pointedness of their pens, and pretend to think that ridicule is the test not only of truth but of beauty also, hear what a real wit says of them. It should seem by what follows, that their calling has not even novelty in its favour, but was as rife three hundred years ago as it is now.

He says, he has observed, of "that kind of people who seek a praise by dispraising others, that they do prodigally spend a great many wandering words in quips and scoffs, carping and taunting at each thing which, by stirring the spleen, may stay the brain from a thorough beholding the worthiness of the subject. These kind of objections, as they are full of a very idle easiness, since there is nothing of so sacred a majesty, but that an itching tongue may rub itself upon it, so deserve they no other answer but, instead of laughing at the jest, to laugh at the jester. We know a playing wit can praise the discretion of an ass, the comfortableness of being in debt, and the jolly commodities of being sick of the plague."—"Marry, these pleasant fault-finders, who will correct the *verb* before they understand the *noun*, and confute other's knowledge before they confirm their own, I would have them only remember that scoffing cometh not of wisdom : so as the best title, in true English, they get with their merriments is, to be called *good fools* ; for so have our grave forefathers ever termed that humourous kind of jesture."

If the reader should find that some of the arguments in the following extracts do not come upon him with the force of novelty, he must recollect that this is any body's fault rather than Sir Philip Sidney's.

"But what ! shall the abuse of a thing make the right use odious ? Nay, truly, though I yield that poesy may not only be abused, but that, being abused, by the reason of its sweet charming force it can do more hurt than any other army of words ; yet shall it be so far from concluding that the abuse shall give reproach to the abused, that, contrariwise, it is a good reason that whatsoever, being abused, doth most harm, being rightly used (and upon the right use each thing receives its title) doth most good. Do we not see skill in physic—the best ram-

pure to our often assaulted bodies—being abused, turn poison—the most violent destroyer? Doth not knowledge of law—whose end is to even and right all things—being abused, grow the crooked fosterer of horrible injuries? Doth not (to go to the highest) God's word abused breed heresy, and his name abused become blasphemy?—Truly, a needle cannot do much hurt; and as truly (with leave of ladies be it spoken) it cannot do much good. But with a sword thou mayest kill thy father, and with a sword thou mayest defend thy prince and country. So that, as in their calling poets the fathers of lies, they said nothing, so in this their argument of abuse they prove the commendation."

There is great acuteness and precision in the following remarks on laughter:—

"But our comedians think there is no delight without laughter; which is very wrong. For though laughter may come *with* delight, yet cometh it not *of* delight, as though delight should be the cause of laughter. But well may one thing breed two together. Nay, in themselves they have, as it were, a kind of contrariety; for delight we scarcely do, but in things that have a conveniency to ourselves and to general nature; whereas laughter almost ever cometh of things most disproportionate to ourselves and nature.—Delight hath a joy in it either permanent or present; laughter hath only a scornful tickling. For example, we are ravished with delight to see a fair woman, and yet are far from being moved to laughter. We laugh at deformed creatures, wherein, certainly, we cannot delight. We delight in good chances; we laugh at mischances. We delight to hear the happiness of our friends and country; at which he were worthy to be laughed at, that would laugh. We shall, contrarily, sometimes laugh to find a matter quite mistaken, and go down the hill against the bias. In the mouth of some such men as, for the respect of them, one shall be heartily sorry, yet he cannot chuse but laugh, and so is rather pained than delighted with laughter."

We now pass at once to the concluding passage of this charming piece of writing; a conclusion that is in every way worthy of what has preceded it: and a greater panegyric on it cannot be pronounced.

"So that, since the ever-praise-worthy poesy is full of virtue, breeding delightfulness, and void of no gift that ought to be in the noble name of learning; since the blames laid against it are either false or feeble; since the cause why it is not esteemed in England is the fault of poet-apes, not poets; since, lastly, our tongue is most fit to honour poesy, and to be honoured by poesy; I conjure you all, that have the evil luck to read this ink-wasting toy of mine, even in the

name of the nine muses, no more to scorn the sacred mysteries of poesy; no more to laugh at the name of poets, as though they were next inheritors to fools; no more to jest at the reverend title of a rhymers; but to believe, with Aristotle, that they were the antient treasures of the Grecian's divinity; to believe, with Bembo, that they were the first bringers in of all civility; to believe, with Scaliger, that no philosopher's precepts can sooner make you an honest man than the reading of Virgil; to believe, with Clauserus, the translator of Cornutus, that it pleased the Heavenly Deity, by Hesiod and Homer, under the veil of fables, to give us all knowledge—logic, rhetoric, philosophy natural and moral, and *quid non?*—to believe, with me, that there are many mysteries contained in poetry, which of purpose were written darkly, lest of profane wits they should be abused; to believe, with Landin, that they are so beloved of the gods that whatsoever they write proceeds from a divine fury; lastly, to believe themselves, when they tell you they will make you immortal by their verses.—Thus doing, your names shall flourish in printers' shops; thus doing, you shall be a-kin to many a poetical preface; thus doing, you shall be most fair, most rich, most wise, most all; you shall dwell among superlatives:—thus doing, though you be *libertino patre natus*, you shall suddenly grow *Herculeus proles*:

Si quid mea carmina possunt

Thus doing, your soul shall be placed with Dante's Beatrix, or Virgil's Anchises.

"But if (fie of such a but!) you be horn so near the dull-making cataract of Nilus that you cannot hear the planet-like music of poetry; if you have so earth-creeping a mind that it cannot lift itself up to look to the sky of poetry, or rather, by a certain rustical disdain, will become such a Mome as to be a Momus to poetry; then, though I will not wish unto you the ass's ears of Midas, nor to be driven by a poet's verses, as Bubonax was, to hang himself, nor to be rhymed to death, as is said to be done in Ireland: yet thus much curse I must lend you in the behalf of all poets—that, while you lacking skill of a sonnet; and when you live, you live in love, and never get favour for die, your memory die from the earth for want of an epitaph."

On the evening of St. Bartholomew's, during the massacre, a citizen of Paris, reputed to be very rich, was closely pursued by an assassin, sword in hand, to whom the citizen kept crying—"Sir, sir, you are mistaken, I am really a true catholic."—"Possibly," replied the other, at the same time piercing him with his sword, "but your money is heretic."

THE PARTITION OF THE EARTH.

(From Schiller.)

When Jove had encircled our planet with light,
And had roll'd the proud orb on its way,
And had given the Moon to illumine it by night,
And the broad sun to rule it by day ;
The reign of its surface he form'd to agree
With the wisdom that govern'd its plan ;
He divided the earth, and apportioned the sea,
And he gave the dominion to man.

The hunter he sped to the forest and wood,
And the husbandman seized on the plain ;
The fisherman launch'd his canoe on the flood,
And the merchant embark'd on the main
The mighty partition was finished at last,
When a figure came listlessly on ;
But fearful and wild were the looks that he cast
When he found that the labour was done.

The mien of disorder, the wreath which he wore,
And the frenzy that flash'd from his eye,
And the lyre of ivory and gold which he bore,
Proclaim'd that the poet was nigh ;
And he rush'd all in tears, at the fatal decree,
To the foot of the Thunderer's throne,
And complain'd that no spot of the earth or the sea
Had been given to the bard as his own.

And the Thunderer smiled at his prayer and his mien,
Though he mourn'd the request was too late ;
And he ask'd in what regions the Poet had been,
When his lot was decided by fate.
O ! pardon my error, he humbly replied,
Which sprung from a vision too bright,
My soul at the moment was close by thy side,
Entranc'd in these regions of light.

It hung on thy visage, it bask'd in thy smile,
And it rode on thy glances of fire ;
And forgive, if, bewild'rd and dazzled the while—
It forgot every earthly desire.
The earth, said the Godhead, is portion'd away,
And I cannot reverse the decree,
But the heavens are mine, and the regions of day—
And their portal is open to thee

LORD F. L. GOWER.

THE DEATH OF LEONIDAS.

It was the wild midnight—
A storm was on the sky ;
The lightning gave its light,
And the thunder echoed by.

The torrent swept the glen,
The ocean lash'd the shore ;
Then rose the Spartan men,
To make their bed in gore.

Swift from the deluged ground
Three hundred took the shield ;
Then, in silence, gather'd round
The Leader of the field.

He spoke no warrior-word,
He bade no trumpet blow ;
But the signal-thunder roar'd,
And they rush'd upon the foe.

The fiery element
Shew'd with one mighty gleam,
Rampart, and flag, and tent,
Like the spectres of a dream.

All up the mountain's side,
All down the woody vale,
All by the rolling tide
Waved the Persian banners pale.

And foremost from the pass,
Among the slumbering band,
Sprang King Leonidas,
Like the lightning's living brand.

Then double darkness fell,
And the forest ceased its moan ;
But there came a clash of steel,
And a distant, dying groan.

Anon, a trumpet blew,
And a fiery sheet burst high,
That o'er the midnight threw
A blood-red canopy.

A host glared on the hill ;
A host glared by the bay ;
But the Greeks rush'd onwards still,
Like leopards in their play.

The air was all a yell,
And the earth was all a flame,
Where the Spartan's bloody steel
On the silken turbans came.

And still the Greek rush'd on
Where the fiery torrent roll'd,
Till, like a rising sun,
Shone Xerxes' tent of gold.

They found a royal feast,
His midnight banquet, there ;
And the treasures of the East
Lay beneath the Doric spear.

Then sat to the repast
The bravest of the brave !
That feast must be their last,
That spot must be their grave.

They pledged old Sparta's name
In cups of Syrian wine,
And the warrior's deathless fame
Was sung in strains divine.

They took the rose-wreath'd lyres
From eunuch and from slave,
And taught the languid wires
The sounds that Freedom gave.

But now the morning star
Crown'd Ceta's twilight brow ;
And the Persian horn of war
From hills began to blow.

Up rose the glorious rank,
To Greece one cup pour'd high—
Then, hand in hand, they drank
"To immortality !"

Fear on King Xerxes fell,
When, like spirits from the tomb,
With shout and trumpet-knell,
He saw the warriors come.

But down swept all his power,
With chariot and with charge ;
Down pour'd the arrowy shower
Till sank the Dorian's targe.

They gather'd round the tent,
With all their strength unstrung ;
To Greece one look they sent,
Then on high their torches flung.

Their king sat on the throne,
His captains by his side,
While the flame rush'd roaring on,
And their Pæan loud replied !

Thus fought the Greek of old !
Thus will he fight again !
Shall not the self-same mould
Bring forth the self-same men !—CROLY.

THE ESSAYIST.

THE RIVAL BEAUTIES.

ANASTASIA and MARIA met at a ball in Paris; they were rival beauties, and each seemed to represent the nation to which she belonged; they both had a train of admirers, and the opposite parties ingratiated themselves with the beauty of their preference, by finding fault with the rival of her charms. "Maria wanted feeling and expression, was deficient in wit and liveliness," alleged the flutterers round Anastasia's attractions. "Anastasia was too artificial, too studied, had an infantine voice, and had not the transcendency of complexion which Maria possessed," exclaimed the flatterers who composed her circle; each bent on the other a jealous eye, yet each took a different road to gain the heart; the former, by her sportive manner and by her proficiency in the art of flirting, and the thorough study of the graces, took the affections by a *coup de main*; the latter seemed intent on throwing a secret enchantment over the beholder, and fain would appear neglectful of her conquest, and unconscious of her power; this warfare of bright eyes and of external perfections, added to archness on the part of the one, and commanding qualities on that of the other, made desperate havoc amongst the beaux; but that my reader may decide for himself, I shall present him with the portraits of these charmers.

Anastasia is of stature a little above the middle size, but proportioned symmetrically—her foot and ankle are *chefs-d'œuvre* of nature, her waist is taper to a wonder, her features are not regular, but she possesses two brilliant diamonds curtained by a rich long silk fringe, which makes it impossible to meet her eyes without falling a victim to them; her mouth is not excessively small, but her lips and teeth make amends for this circumstance, and are of the first cast; they too, occasion strange sensations to a sensitive being, and she is so much a mistress of the art to please, that her means are infinite and inexhaustible; I had forgotten her jet black ringlets and clear brown skin of exquisite polish and softness, but I might be pardoned for forgetting any thing when dwelling on the subject of her lips and eyes. Maria's form is majestic, tall, imposing, and of that species which mingles astonishment and respect with admiration and a tender feeling; the alabaster of her well-turned shoulders, matchless bosom, and elegant arms defies description, whilst a full blue eye of purest lustre, and a profusion of dark brown hair, contrasted by the lily and the rose, the pearl and ruby of her small mouth, and fine blooming complexion, render her a finished picture of excellence, over which

the calmness of innocence and the dignity of high birth cast an enchantment of no common kind. The manners of these lovely ones are as different as their persons; the former bewitches, whilst the latter appears to engage and to condescend at the same time; the one transfixes, the other attracts and binds her victim: Anastasia's conversation is playful and amiable, obliging, entertaining, fascinating; that of Maria is gentle, and graceful, but placid and of a dignified yet retiring nature. In dress the beauty of France displays a knowledge and taste most superlative, whilst the maid of Albion assumes a simplicity which is, nevertheless, highly adorned.

I had an opportunity of seeing them both in the same occupations, namely, in the dance, and playing on different instruments; Anastasia's downcast yet not distant eyes, whilst moving through the waltz, must certainly have been enough to warm the breast of an anchorite, and put to nothing all the coolness of a stoic. Maria's form challenged the most scrutinizing eye of criticism, but her passions were not brought into play, nor were her feet and eyes in unison at this moment. The British dancers rather neglect the body in favour of the feet; the French do justice to both. A young man might have wished, on this occasion, to have been the lover of the one, but would have felt comfortable in being the husband of the other. Anastasia played with the guitar as if she could make it speak what language she pleased, and as she carelessly, but with the hand of a mistress, struck its chords, her eyes, her smiles, her dimples, and her varied expressions did incalculable execution. Maria bent o'er her harp, and whilst she threw her taper fingers o'er the strings, she looked like no earthly being, her soul was wrapt in melody, and silence seemed enamoured of every sound which she produced. In a quadrille, performed by active youth of each sex, Anastasia bore off the prize, for Maria seemed to mingle complaisance with her exertions, although her steps were critically performed, she seemed to assist in the merry ring, whilst her rival actually appeared to reign and to be the genius of the dance. Loud was the applause, and boundless the approbation which either lady gained from her party, but very different the opinions given as to personal beauty, dress, address, conversation, music, dance, &c.; the British beauty touched with the enchantress's wand the pulse of many a foreigner, though I am not clear that novelty was not one charm thrown into her preponderating scale; but Anastasia not only kept a host of her own nation captives to her fascinations, but she surprised and electrified a very huge proportion of sage and sober English characters. After supper,

her conversation and sprightliness gained over some deserters from the other side, and left her almost mistress of the field, although I thought that I could detect a little too much endeavour to charm. Maria now seemed to be indifferent to applause, and that very air regained her more than one fugitive. It was at times a most puzzling thing to decide on her to whom the palm should be awarded, but, upon counting numbers, Gallia had a small majority. I do confess, that I was illiberal enough to be mortified at this, yet, on reflecting, I was convinced that manner often does more than matter, and that she who aspires to captivate, must be pleased as well as pleasing; where was the fault in either beauty? I could see none.

In this dilemma I applied to a French nobleman who is a great judge in these matters, I begged his candid opinion, at the same time, I saw with satisfaction that he looked with admiring eyes on my fair country-woman: "I will tell you exactly the whole affair," said he, "and that too in the language of one of our celebrated poets."

"Au gré de tous les yeux Clymène a des attraits;
Un peu de passion est ce qu'on lui souhaite;
Pour l'amitié seule, elle n'en manque pas;
Cinq ou six grains d'amour, et Clymène est parfaite."

LA FONTAINE.

I had no difficulty in comprehending that Clymène meant Maria, nor in understanding what he considered as the only requisite to her perfection. A little nationality now came into my mind, and I was about to accuse the majority of a want of taste and discernment; I was also just about to decide, that the opinion of the many is not the standard of wisdom, that many a male butterfly would be no loss to the court of our British Venus, and that, perhaps, she had in talent what she fell short of in numbers. At this critical juncture, I came in contact with the brunette object of adoration, and drawing respectfully back to let her pass, she made me a curtesy with so much grace, whilst her bright eyes thanked me with so much heart and sensibility, that I tottered on the brink of apostacy as to where I would have paid my vows had I been young and handsome, rich and gay, and a being of a *disponible* situation.

THE DANCE.

A cold and selfish being when he descends the vale of years, becomes insensible to the pleasures of another age, and, forgetting his own feelings at the time, withdraws from being a witness to the sports of youth, nay often condemns them; he is in the language of Horace,

"Difficilis, querulus, laudator temporis acti;"

and you will hear him continually saying, "*it was not so in my time.*" One would imagine, from the statement of such characters, that the globe had taken a retrograde motion since the last century, and that there was no advancement or improvement since; now the fact is decidedly the contrary, as I have had to observe, since my younger days, in a thousand particulars.

To return, however, to my first statement; the pleasures in which old age cannot becomingly mingle are many, but it is by no means necessary on that account either to despise them, or refuse to be present at them; of this number is the dance, and I know a score of old gentlemen and ladies, who criticise the dance and cry, "I hate to see a parcel of conceited creatures whisking about in a quadrille, or sailing through the immodest waltz;" others detest a child's ball, and either fly to the card table, there to lose their money, or their temper, or perhaps both, sooner than witness a pastime in which they cannot participate; and I have frequently observed a knot of tabbies and aged bachelors hovering on the flank of a quadrille, or inspecting a waltz with envious look, in order to be able to dissect every beauty and to find some fault with each individual engaged in a harmless and elegant amusement. "One lady is too easy; a second beauty is too bold; a third is awkward; a fourth dances *too well*; it is quite an exhibition; the marquis is too Frenchified; Sir Charles is too bad—it is open love-making in the waltz—the squire dances like a bumpkin—the officer of the guards is a lump of conceit—Lady Betty's a harridan, and her sister is a prude; the dowager is too old to dance, and the admiral's daughter is too young; the one ought to be thinking of something more suited to her years, and it is a shame to bring out the other so young in life." There is no pleasing these severe judges, and beauty is certain to give offence, since

"Smallest specks are seen on snow."

I remember a noble peer making the following remark to me at a ball at court: "Do, pray look at old lady ———, how she eyes lady Mary ———! She puts me in mind of a cat watching a canary bird." This remark I have found applicable to many since.

For my own part, I delight to sit in the corner of a ball-room, and to admire the rising generation—to behold the fine turned limbs and exquisite proportions of lovely woman—to witness that animation and elasticity which only exist in the spring of life—to admire smiles and the increased roses of the female performers; and to approve of the excellence of those who are finished dancers. I look back to my own

younger days, and only regret that they were not of longer duration, those winged moments,

"Eheu fugaces."

Even a child's ball has charms for me, since sportiveness and innocence never can fail to be interesting.

To do justice to France, I must say, that *la danse* is more general than with us; it extends to all ages—it occupies all classes; it is entered into with more spirit and perfection than any where else by the young, and is sanctioned and praised by the old. In France, the lower orders not only dance, but they dance the very same figures as the higher classes; the woman of fashion and the laundress both dance and waltz; the private soldier and the lowest mechanic figure in the quadrille, or glide through the latter dance of German origin: all dance—the population is in perpetual motion,

"And young and old come forth to play,
And dance the cares of life away."

I am convinced that the people owe to this exercise health and high spirits, for the dance leaves no care behind it, unless a piercing black eye does execution, and the heart is wiled away in the mazes of the waltz.

Having said so much on dancing in general, it may not be amiss to give a short dissertation on its particularities and on its tendency and utility. What then is dancing? It is exercise taken in a graceful manner; activity reduced to system; and the addresses of the youth of one sex to the fairer work of nature in a kind of pantomimic portraiture of attitudes and steps; which are sometimes the first advances to love or friendship, to attachment and to matrimony. The dance is of various kinds, but the meaning is always the same; the minuet, now so little in use, is an assemblage of very graceful postures and positions, from the first bow and courtesy of respect and making acquaintance, to the last extending of arms to come to a conclusion,—the right and left arm extended at another period is not unlike an offer of the hand, the glances at the turning corners serve as opportunities to the lady for exhibiting a fine arched neck and well-proportioned shoulders, and to the gentleman to cast partial but respectful looks on his young partner, who, perchance, blushes and appears doubly interesting on that account. The quadrille (much improved within the last twenty years) is a dance of great variety and beauty; it admits of a number of agile, well-invented, fanciful and difficult steps, its figures are many, amongst which the *en avant deux* is a leading feature; the *balancing* represents a playful flirting, and "how happy could I be with either!" when you *balancez* first to

your next female dancer, and then to your partner; indeed the whole of a quadrille is a gay well-bred flirtation between partner and vis-a-vis, the former figuring occasionally with the happy vis-a-vis, to return with more effect and more welcomely to him to whom her hand had been given for the dance. I have heard ladies doubtful whether they preferred a good partner or a good vis-a-vis; both are necessary, but a little preference leans towards the former. Mademoiselle, a young lady of my acquaintance, likes to have her admirer for her partner, and her brother for her vis-a-vis, the latter to show off her dancing, as he is an admirable dancer himself; the former to be the tender companion of these mirthful moments.

The waltz has undoubtedly a charm in it which no other dance possesses, from the facility which it gives to behold so nearly the charms of the female *engaged* and *engaging in it*, to hold her delicate shape in one arm, (at the commencement) and in both at an after period (some of our British fair keep their partners at arm's length from them, but that is not the original genuine waltz), to meet her eyes continually as she spins round, and to step in unison with her lightly-moving feet. I must acknowledge that the waltz looks very like close love-making, and on that account a young woman should consider who she is going to waltz with. But I am not sure, whether the rendering the waltz a matter of course at a ball, and the attaching no importance to it, as is the case every where abroad, does not render the matter more simple and harmless, than making all the distinctions of who, and where, and when, and then, after all, playing the prude awhile to consent to take a partner, and to go through the blushing and ogling of coquetry; for if the male partner be a libertine, he ought not to be allowed to dance with any man's wife, daughter, or sister, any dance, or anywhere; and if otherwise, the dance will be innocent whatever be its form. The English country dance pleases me the least: it has, however, the merit of possessing a variety of steps, and of uniting a great number of people together: there is less coquetry in it than in those above-mentioned, but it wants much of their elegance.

The motives for dancing, as well as the effects which it produces, vary according to the age of man; in childish age the pleasure of jumping, and bounding like the game-some lamb is the chief attraction; in the sunshine of our days the partner is the powerful magnet—in the decline of autumn men dance from complaisance, or from the ambition of having a titled lady's hand, or from wishing to appear younger than they are; elderly misses dance in order to make

it evident that they are not quite laid on the shelf; and good-natured elderly gentlemen dance with children, or ladies who would sit neglected and alone, and such complaisance is highly honourable to them with respect to those who pride themselves on their superiority as dancers: the same feeling occurs in every other accomplishment, and is not blame-worthy, unless it be carried to excess. The ingredients necessary to make up a proper dancer are, a good figure, kind countenance, a knowledge of the science, well-bred manners, and attention to your partner. The effects of dancing differ, as I have already observed, with the time of life of the performer, mere amusement, a tender inclination, the wish to please and be pleased, or that politeness which performs an act contrary to inclination or convenience, merely to make another momentarily happy, and to pluck from their mind the thorn of care, and sooth a regret at being passed over and forgotten.

I have nothing more to add on this subject, except to say, that as Italy is the favoured soil for

"The concord of sweet sounds,"

so is her neighbour France the land of the cheerful dance; and long may her children, leaving to the sullen Spaniard his jealousy and haughty spirit, tread care under their feet, and spring joyfully on their happy soil. That every fair *danseuse*, whether of Britain, France, or of the warmer and more meridional countries, may find a vis-a-vis and a partner to her mind, and that she may ultimately be engaged for life to one, is the wish of their general admirer, although he be the grave and

WANDERING HERMIT.

FOR THE

NEW-YORK LITERARY GAZETTE.

TALES FROM CROSSBASKET.

By Francis Topic.

THE BRIDAL EVE.

[Continued.]

AFTER a prosperous passage, the wherry arrived at its destined place, and safely landed its valuable freight. This was the first night Donald had ever spent out of his native village, and it was a lonely one to him: a thousand thoughts crossed his imagination—joyful anticipations and distressing fears. These, however, were soon driven from his mind, for the active preparations Lord John was making, in and about his new dwelling, demanded Donald's time and thoughts, as he

had the superintendence of all. At length, to his joy, an occasion presented itself for him to revisit Ardentine. No one ever embarked as joyously as he: his heart in his bosom bounded lighter than his bark upon the waves, and he steered through the blue waters with a master hand.

When arrived in sight of that spot on earth, which was dearest to him, his thoughts dwelt among the days that were passed, and in imagination he lived over again the happy hours he had spent with his Helen. None but a lover knows the anxious hours a lover has—many fears flashed across his mind, even at the very time when a few moments would assure him of the reality. He gazed on every well-known mark of the shore; each one was identified with Helen, and every high peak of the hills reminded him of her, for there was her name engraven. Her cottage looked to his eye neater and more cheerful than all the others, and even the smoke from its chimney curled more gracefully to heaven. It is a strange eye with which a lover looks! Though he was cutting his way fleetly through the waters, he chided his tardy bark, for he looked on, and his heart was already within her dwelling. The last moments of a voyage, to lovers, as to all, are ever the most tedious. Helen saw the well-known vessel approach, and gazed fondly on it, till she descried Donald's bonnet waving in the air: she kissed her hand to him, as token of recognition, and now assured that he was well, entered her cottage, that, unobserved by the rude eyes of callous spectators, she might give him welcome. In a few moments more, Donald clasped her in his arms.

I need not tell all he said, nor how much he pressed her to name the bridal day: with a maiden's diffidence at length she fixed the happy one, and both looked forward to it, as the dawning of a new life—as the summit of their earthly bliss.

The preparations necessary for the nuptials of people in their station, are neither many, pompous, nor expensive. Donald's presence being required by Lord John, he could not wait to attend to these himself, but entrusted all to his bride and her parents; and as he could not prolong his visit, he set sail, and for a second time departed from all that was dear to him on earth: not however without assuring Helen he would return upon the BRIDAL EVE, that the ceremony might be performed on the appointed day early enough to give sufficient time to convey his bride to her new abode before its close.

Time waits for none: the longest period comes round at last, though lovers seldom think so, till it is realized. At length the day preceding the nuptial one arrived, and

was ushered in with dismal clouds and storm: the waves of the sea lashed and foamed about in wild rage, seemingly angry at the day. The blighted foliage bended beneath the blast; but regardless of it, the bleak hills kept their heads erect.

What at such a time could daunt a lover's mind? Donald heeded neither wind nor wave; his wherry was "tight and yere," and he a skilful pilot, so with fearless leap, he bounded into his bark, and Towler, who never forsook his master, was in an instant by his side. The hardy and intrepid boatmen gave the reefed sails to the gale, and they left the land, alas! with too high and sanguine hopes.

Night was now near, and as the day waned, the wind blew more furiously, and raged in uncontrolled might, which before seemed held in awe by the god of day. The white spray dashed over the vessel, and every roll of the waves flashed with phosphoric light, and showed the dauntless voyagers the perilous cavities, between which they were boldly braving.

Let me now turn to Helen. This was an anxious day to her: she saw how sullenly the moon arose, and the omens which foretold a stormy night. She could not allow herself to fear for Donald's safety, for she knew his bark was good and he skilful; yet she wished a thousand times he were arrived.

Her thoughts were so intensely fixed upon the morrow, it almost seemed to her she had anticipated the time, and that her bridal day was come. A thousand hopes of future weal, and a thousand fears of future woe, pressed on her imagination—and her mind was so filled with these thoughts, which maidens feel at such a time, but man cannot describe, that night had already approached—but Donald was not arrived. Still she did not fear for him, but again fervently wished that she knew he were safe. "I know he is constant," she said: "he never deceived any one, and surely he never would deceive me; he is, and must be safe too—love with outstretched wings will guide his bark, and spirits which wait on virtue, will protect him in the hour of need."

Night had now set in: the wind blew louder, and the waves mounted higher. The moon and stars had all withdrawn, shrouded in an eternity of clouds, and the rain fell in torrents, as if heaven were weeping at the dreadful scene. With anxious mind and aching breast, Helen kept her watch at the window, against which the heavy rain furiously poured, where she had placed her lamp to be a beacon-light, to which her lover might steer. She could not think that any disaster had befallen him,

for smiling hope, with merry step danced before her imagination—but in a moment the grim faced demon of despair appeared, and poured his poison on her peace of mind.

"Is this my BRIDAL EVE?" she sighed; "it is an angry one, but all will yet be well, yet would I give the world to have assurance of it."

Midnight was now drawing near, still Helen surveyed the chaos without: so impenetrable was the darkness, that all seemed a void to her, save now and then, the phosphoric light of the waves was seen as they rolled terribly about. Hope is the last thing that will leave this world, at least it is the last that forsakes the human breast. Still Helen gazed, and still hoped, not that if Donald had embarked he could be safe, but that he had not ventured on the sea in such a storm: yet, when she thought he had never broken his word to her, nor to any else, her spirits sunk again, and her mind was gloomy as the night without.

The thunder was heard far on the other shore, but gradually and gradually it approached, till it rolled awfully over her cottage, and echo answered from every peak: each flash of the red lightning showed to Helen's feverish sight the appalling scene. Another flash!—she saw a something on the loch, it looked like a spectre bark, and fled before her imagination, quick as a meteor—the scene closed, and left the time more dreadful than before! She thought it was prophetic! Her heart beat, she gave one convulsive start, and her mind was filled with tortures.

The parents sat on each side of the hearth, scarcely in less agony than their daughter: at times, their eyes would meet, but in a moment would in mute anguish fall: again, as if instinctively, both would turn to Helen, and bitterly sigh to feel that hope was almost dead, and to view her the very image of despair, gazing so steadfastly on the wild blank of the stormy elements.

Now, on the threshold a light step was heard. Helen, darting up in the agony of unassured hope, cried "he is safe, he is come!" and ran to the door—ere she could lift the latch a pawing was heard, her heart almost failed; the moment she opened the door, faithful Towler rushed in, his shaggy hair was drenched with the briny flood, and his large eyes fixed in his head, had a terrific look. The brave animal fell at Helen's feet almost exhausted, and uttered a fearful groan. The parents, whom the first tone of joy had roused from their dream of terrors, gazed on the dumb creature, without power either to speak or move—but the dog surveyed each face alternately with such a look that spoke horrid imaginings.

[To be continued.]

THE NEW-YORK LITERARY GAZETTE, AND CORRESPONDENCE.

WE cordially concur in the sentiments of our correspondent. Those who "act well their parts" on and off the stage are well worthy of esteem.—ED.

SIR,

WHY is it, that although individual worth may equal public celebrity, the dramatic performer with respect to private consideration, encounters the depressing association of prejudice and obloquy? From scenic representations are derived our highest and most innocent gratifications; from its influence the mind gathers instruction; the sensibilities become expanded; we are softened by virtuous emotions and roused by their more energetic impressions; and these sentiments which thus penetrate the spectator, may they not equally strengthen the moral education of the performer? We know that he is not merely a handsome piece of mechanism—that to produce these effects, grace and beauty, with all their harmonious accompaniments, are alone inadequate—that reciprocal dependence subsists between the noblest creations of genius and the kindred conceptions of talent. To delineate the meaning of an author, beside an intimate acquaintance with human character, intellect must be aided by arduous study, universal knowledge, and profound research; and to depict the manners of refinement, are required the accomplishments and habit of polished society. Yet in the successful concentration of every natural and acquired endowment, imparting delight, and formed to adorn the circle of social enjoyment, the actor is debarred from congenial sympathies, with a heart unfilled by applause, his sole resource those who hold an inferior situation, and who are of inferior faculties, or the humiliation of constrained and partial, or selfish and degraded cordiality; and when to all these ills are added, the inseparable disgusts, painful drudgery, and laborious duties of his occupation, who but inexperienced youth, in this fatal selection of complicated evil and oppression, would incur the subjection of an arbitrary inequality, and in the denial of merited respectability, the refusal of that justice whose principle is extended to all?

C. L.

New-York Literary Gazette.

LORD BYRON.

"The base multitude, day after day, week after week, month after month, year after year, got up brutal falsehoods concerning his private life, and these they mixed up and blended with their narrow and confused conceptions of his poetical productions, till they imagined the real living, flesh-and-blood Byron, to be a monster, familiarly known to them in all his hideous propensities and practices. He was with all his faults a noble being."—*Blackwood's Magazine*, No. 98

To be an independent man in the present age, requires uncommon audacity of disposition. He who is "too fond of the right to pursue the expedient," must nerve his mind to bear censure, reproach, and obloquy from the throng whose sinuous course his own honourable and straight-forward conduct puts to shame. It is no longer safe to call things by their right names—hypocrisy is termed morality, cowardice is prudence, swindling is proper attention to one's interests, and roguery is talent; while truth is impertinence, sincerity is impudence, and a nice sense of honour is either ferocity or quixotism.

The personal character of Lord Byron was remarkable for its independence.—Circumstances combined to render him proud, noble birth, wealth, and elevated genius, a heart naturally intrepid and incapable of meanness, necessarily form a proud character, and when brought in contact with base and low-minded creatures, they add haughtiness to pride. We believe it is an oriental proverb, that "the arrow of contempt will pierce the shell of the tortoise"—sluggishness, which neither ambition nor vanity can rouse to action, will be metamorphosed into activity, in revenge of scorn and disdain. Nothing is more intolerant, nothing is more unforgiving, than the revenge of a selfish and contemptible man against his superior who has dared to curl his lip at baseness and folly. That this was one great cause of the personal malignity which persecuted Lord Byron, there can be no doubt; and when to this is added the envy of the mean, the vile, and the worthless, it is folly to hope that the character of even a saint could pass through their hands without abuse and aspersion. Lord Byron was no saint—he was a man compounded of good and evil, of noble virtues, of generous passions, and undoubtedly of great faults. He

made no pretensions to that sublimated character "all passionless and pure," all refined from the frailties of humanity, all indifferent to earth and all attached to heaven, which the rancorous and hypocritical laureate of England so modestly claims as his own. Byron claimed not such perfection—Byron was only high-minded, generous, manly, honorable and brave; but what were all these traits compared to the spotless purity of a Bowles, or the unearthly piety of a Southey? It is enough to sicken the heart with human nature, to see such men as this duumvirate held up as paragons of excellence, and then to turn to the grave of the slandered Byron, and mark the serpents that are crawling there, empoisoning the laurels that flourish above it, and rioting over the decay of a noble and magnanimous breast.

By what foundation are the ten thousand scandals against Byron supported? Do they rest on the responsibility of honourable names, on the veracity of gentlemen? Do they even rest on the basis of *probability*? Where is there a statement of his vices which is avouched by a name of respectability? Whence have we in America derived our authority for abusing him? Is it not from the columns of the English newspaper conductors, whose hirelings, "terrible-accident makers," and drudges, are paid by the job for inventing falsehoods to pamper the voracious appetites of scandal; who are anonymous in their attacks, and secure from punishment by means of their very baseness? Does not Sir Walter Scott invariably speak of Byron with affection and esteem? Was not Byron beloved by Moore, and Rogers, and Hobhouse, and is not the friendship of such men a resistless proof of his *personal* worth? If the character of a man of genius is to be blackened and ruined by secret defamers, anonymous assassins, and wanton slanders, it were better to administer poison to every boy that exhibits the promise of talents, and to leave the great theatre of existence free to the blind and deluded multitude.

We will not pretend to conceal our intense anxiety that the character of Lord Byron should be seen in its true light, and not handed down to posterity as a black spot on his fame. We shall not shrink from the unpopular effort to do him justice—no threats shall intimidate, and no selfish considera-

tions shall dissuade us; and be the consequences what they may, we shall dare to go on in his defence so long as one independent man is left to tell us that we have done well.

Let Lord Byron be judged by his writings, and by the statements of responsible persons, of gentlemen, and of men of character, not by the corrupt breath of anonymous scribblers, who would forge falsehoods for a dollar, and blaspheme for a pound. Away with such "censures morum" as Southey and Bowles, and their fellow-hounds that bark and howl in the path of genius, straining every nerve to be *honoured* by its enmity. Let the community awake to the knowledge that they have been insulted by false witnesses; that they have been taught to hate a noble and exalted man; that they have been imposed upon by misstatements and misrepresentations; and let them rise in their might, to appease the *manes* of Byron, and to prostrate in the dust the unparalleled slanderers from whose hatred even the sanctity of the shroud affords no asylum.

We have not room in this number for our strictures on the North American, No. 49. We shall not drop the subject until we have gone thoroughly over the ground.

The New-York Literary Gazette.

To ———.

Away from my heart—thou'rt as worthless and vain
As the meanest of insects that flutter in air;
I have broken the bonds of our union in twain,
For the spots of thy shame and thy falsehood were there—

The woman who still in the day-dawn of youth
Can hold out her hand for the kisses of all—
Whose heart is dishonour, whose tongue is untruth,
Doth justify man when he breaks from her thrall.

Yet, deem not I hate thee—my heart is too high
To feast on the spoil of so abject a foe;
I but deem thee unworthy a curse or a sigh,
For pity too base, and for vengeance too low.
I deem thee a reptile that crept o'er my path,
Like the crocodile, false—like the adder, ingrate;
But I hold thee unworthy to merit my wrath—
Too feeble to harm, and too worthless to hate.

Then away, unregretted, unhonour'd thy name—
In my moments of scorn recollected alone—
Soon others shall wake to behold thee the same
As I have beheld thee, and *thou shalt be known*;
There are eyes beaming on me far brighter than thine—
There's a heart that beats fondly and truly for me,
Where my feelings may worship at *purity's* shrine,
And smile at their freedom from sin and from thee!

THE NEW-YORK LITERARY GAZETTE, AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

WE know the writer of the following article to be a man who never shrinks from the responsibility of his name on subjects of public interest, and whose zeal for the welfare of the republic began with the first spring of the revolution.—ED.

If any modification of an onerous public debt can be proposed, which shall have for its object an increase of the public resources, and great saving of money to the community, the authorities before whom it may come, are bound by the strongest ties of moral and social obligation to consider the proposition.

It appears on the face of the Report of the 15th May, 1821, exhibited by the Comptroller, that the whole of the debt of the corporation of this city amounted on that day to

And that the sinking fund, as now arranged, amounts annually to about 37,000 Dollars.

It is an ascertained fact (whatever the cause that contribute to the effect may be) that the period of redemption of all public funds in relation to the market rate of interest, constitute their *minimum* or *maximum* value.

But it is not so generally understood, that the irredeemibility of a debt for a long period, bearing a high interest when the market rate of interest is low, may be productive of salutary financial operations. If the six per cent. stocks of the Corporation of the city of New-York, were funded on condition that they should not be redeemed under fifteen years, they would bear a premium of more than twenty per cent. in the market, instead of being at par or nearly so.

The unequivocal result of funds instituted on periods of redemption long or short, or payable at pleasure, being fully shown by reference to the daily price of stocks, the inference is natural, that the debt of the Corporation of this city is not placed upon the best footing by the operation of its sinking fund, that it could be advantageously modified, and the creditor not injured in his property or rights.

By looking over the market value of stocks for October 22nd, 1825, the Corporation sixes are quoted at an advance of $1\frac{1}{2}$ to $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., and the new canal sixes bearing a premium of $23\frac{1}{2}$. There is no other way of accounting for this great dissimilarity of $\frac{1}{2}$ in the value of similar annuities, but upon the principles already suggested; the former may be paid off any time at the option of the Corporation, and the latter not redeemable until the year 1840.

The stability of the funds and resources on which both debts are established, cannot make any difference in their respective values, they are equally solid and equally guaranteed by good faith, the difference therefore, can only be in the mode of their institution.

In the estimation of the undersigned, no obligation can be stronger or more binding upon the administrators of any corporate body pledged for a large debt, than that of assigning as near as possible, a definite period for its extinction, without impairing the rights and property of the creditor. The owners of real estate would be pleased with the arrangement, because they might distinctly see an end to their burthens; the renter would be equally pleased, because if the taxes were abated, he would reasonably calculate his rent to be proportionably diminished; the annuitant would have no cause to complain; by the plan he has a fair equivalent for his money, and the poor would have reason to rejoice that a Corporation possessing increasing resources, might confidently look forward to a period when it should be released from the gangrene of a heavy public debt, that they might participate more bountifully in the public contributions.

With these prefatory remarks in deference to public opinion, the undersigned would beg leave to propose the following modification of the debt owing by the Corporation of the city of New-York:

1st. To separate the six per cent. stock from other description of debt.

2d. To show that this description of debt may be paid off within a limited time, without increasing the public burthens, or impairing the rights and interests of the creditor.

3d. The proper application of the sinking fund in relation to the six per cents., and every other species of debt due from the Corporation.

The six per cent. stock of the Corporation, amounted on the 15th day of May, 1822 to

Charged with an annual interest of	\$44,538
The other description of debt consists of bonds at six per cent.	45,000
Five per cents. of 1820	155,000
Five per cents. of 1821	159,900

359,900

	Amount brought forward,	\$ 359,900
Charged with an annual interest on the five per cents. of	15,745	
And with an interest annually on the 6 per cent. bonds	2,700	
Total annual interest on the whole debt	\$62,983	

Amount of principal, \$ 1,102,200

1st. I would propose that the annuitants holding the six per cent. stock of the Corporation, should have it at their option to receive a hundred dollars in money, for every hundred dollars they hold of that stock; or give up one hundred and eighty dollars of such stock, for one hundred dollars of stock redeemable in fifteen years, and bearing an interest of ten per cent. per annum. Although the interest upon one hundred and eighty dollars at six per cent., is ten dollars and eighty cents, and the annuitant by strict calculation, bearing an apparent loss of eighty cents per annum, yet from the nature of funded debts heretofore explained, it is certain that the subscribers to the proposed stock irredeemable for fifteen years, would have it amply made up to them by the great premium such a stock would bear in the market. We find that the new canal five per cents., by a price current of stocks of October 22d, 1825, are at a premium of fifteen to nineteen dollars, it is reasonable to conclude therefore, that the ten per cent. stock, if the level of the market rate of interest be not more than at the present time, will continue to stand a long time above two hundred, instead of one hundred and eighty the original basis of exchange or commutation.

Supposing the Corporation six per cents. to have remained undiminished since May, 1822, viz. \$ 742,300

By the operation of the proposed conversion, there would be extinguished at once the sum of \$ 329,911 12
And the sum to be funded at ten per cent. would amount to 412,388 88

The interest charged upon the present six per cents. amount annually to 44,538
That charged upon the ten per cents. 41,238 88

Making an annual saving of 3,299 12

The report of the Comptroller of the Corporation of the 15th May, 1822, states the receipts of the sinking fund at about \$37,000 per annum, arising from the following items of permanent revenue:

Twenty-five per cent. on the sale of all real estate.	Market Fees.
Commutation of land quit rent.	Street Vaults.
Water Lot Rents.	Hack Licences.
Market Rents.	Pawn Broker's Licences.
	Interest on City Stock, and

if increased by the saving of the interest on the terms of conversion, will annually amount to \$ 40,000

As the sinking fund may be considered a rapidly improving source of revenue, the probability is, that it will yield a permanent annual sum of more than \$ 40,000

2d. I would propose to divide this revenue into two parts. Twenty thousand dollars a year appropriated to extinguish the principal of the ten per cent. stocks at the end of fifteen years, and the other moiety of the sinking fund applied to the extinguishment of the five per cent. stocks, and the outstanding Corporation bonds, bearing an interest of six per cent. Instead of the powerless operation of the sinking fund as managed at present, it is a fact deducible from strict mathematical calculation, that an annuity of twenty thousand dollars successively improved at five per cent. compound interest, if skillfully managed and uninterruptedly applied, will amount in fourteen years seven months and one third, to \$412,388 88, and consequently will be a capital in hand, to redeem the whole of the ten per cent. stock, when it becomes payable according to the original contract with the creditor. If the other moiety of the sinking fund did nothing more than to pay off the five per cents., and the outstanding bonds of the Corporation bearing an interest of six per cent. within the period assigned for the extinguishment of the whole debt, the Corporation at that time would stand thus:

A debt of	\$ 1,102,200 paid.
Released from an annual interest on the same	62,983
Invested with the whole annual product of the sinking fund, which at that time may amount	60,000
	<u>\$ 122,983</u>

WM. W. MORRIS.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE SOCIAL RIGHTS OF MAN :

Being a compilation from the various declarations of Rights, submitted at different periods to the National Assembly and Convention of France, and recently arranged by Count Lanjuinais in his "History of Constitutions."

[Continued.]

THE public powers ought to be so constituted, that, always active, always suited to fulfil their destined purpose, they can never depart from their proper course, to the detriment of the social interest.

The laws ought to be clear, precise, and uniform, to all the citizens.

Law must be impartial, whether it reward or punish, whether it protect or destroy.

Law is the free and solemn expression of the general will; it is the same to all, whether it protect or whether it punish; it can ordain only that which is just and useful to society, and forbid only that which is hurtful.

The law is the general will, expressed by the majority, either of the citizens or of their representatives.

That which is not forbidden by the law, may not be prevented.

Nobody can be constrained to do that which the law does not ordain.

The law should only decree punishments strictly necessary, and proportionate to the offence.

The law should decree only such punishments as are strictly and evidently necessary: the punishment ought to be proportionate to the offence, and useful to society.

The law has a right to forbid actions evidently hurtful to society.

The law should only ordain punishment strictly and evidently necessary; and no man can be punished but by virtue of a law established and promulgated previously to the offence, and legally applied.

To give a retroactive power to a law, is obviously unjust and criminal.

The law has for its sole object the interest of the community; it cannot therefore grant a privilege to whomsoever it pleases: established privileges ought to be abolished immediately, whatever may have been their origin.

No municipal, or other charge, can be imposed upon a citizen without his consent, or that of his representatives.

In like manner, no man ought to pay any national contribution but that which has been freely voted by the representatives of the people.

No contribution ought to be voted, or tax imposed, except for the public wants.

The subsidies ought to be freely consented to, and proportionately assessed.

Liberty consists in being able to do all that is not contrary to the rights of others; thus the exercise of the natural rights of every man, is limited only so far as to ensure the enjoyment of these same rights to the other members of society. This limitation can only be determined by the law.

Liberty, then, has nature for its principle, justice for its rule, and the law for its safeguard: its moral limit is contained in this maxim, "Do unto others as you would they should do unto you."

The preservation of liberty depends on submission to the law, which is the expression of the general will.

The liberty of the press, and of every other means of publishing thoughts, can neither be interdicted, suspended, nor limited.

The right of publishing a man's thoughts and opinions, whether by means of the press or in any other manner, the right of peaceably assembling, and the free exercise of trades, cannot be forbidden.

No man ought to be disturbed on account of his religious opinions.

The free communication of his thoughts and opinions is one of the most precious rights of man; every citizen, then, can speak, write, or print, freely, except that he must answer for the abuse of this liberty in cases determined by the law.

The necessity of declaring his rights supposes either the existence or the recent recollection of despotism.

Liberty and equality of rights admit no distinction of birth, no hereditary authorities.

All the citizens may pretend, and, if chosen, are admissible, to all the public places, employments, and duties. Free people know no other motives of preference in their choice than talents and virtues.

As every citizen has an equal right to defend his life, his honour, and his property, no means of defence ought to be granted to one exclusively of another.

If men are not equal in means, that is to say, in riches, in understanding, and in the various powers of body and mind, it does not follow that they are not equal in natural and civil rights.

Every citizen has a right to the most impartial, exact, and prompt justice, as well with regard to his person as to his property.

[To be continued.]

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